

Statement to 7.30 from Environment Minister Sussan Ley

The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH) has the same irrigation entitlement as any other irrigator except that it is not able to sell water unless it is surplus to its needs. That is clearly not the case and the CEWH's water is protected by legislation.

The CEWH is a statutory authority that makes decisions independently.

The CEWH's primary responsibility is to use its water allocation to protect the environment. There have been occasions where CEWH has traded surplus water back to productive agriculture, as with the Goulburn system last year, but the requirement is that the water is surplus to its needs.